[Vol. 1.] THE [No. 13.]

WEEKLY VISITANT.

"OURS ARE THE PLANS OF FAIR DELIGHTFUL PEACE,
"UNWARP'D BY PARTY RAGE, TO LIVE LIKE BROTHERS."

SALEM—SATURDAY EVENING, MARCH 29, 1806.

ORIGINAL PAPERS.

FOR THE WEEKLY VISITANT.

ON DISPUTATION.

Every one thinks his own judgment superior to that of any other man. No one who differs from me in opinion, has so full a view of the subject as myself, is deficient in talents, or so blinded by prejudice as to be unable to see the force of arguments, or view things in the colouring of nature. If I offer an opinion to the consideration of others, it is frequently disagreed to and controverted, and imagining it to result from want of information, I proceed to lay the subject before them in the light in which I view it, and if then they are not convinced, I feel a contempt for their understandings, doubt their principles, or pity the weakness of their minds. Still I have a desire of making proselites of them, and, feeling my superiority, enter into a dispute with a certainty of victory; and after the dispute is ended, myself and adversaries are equally convinced that each has the advantage. In ninety-nine disputes out of an hundred it is the case, that each thinks he has the superiority, and the other only boasts to conceal his mortification at a defeat.

It would not excite much surprise in my mind, should one man never convince another in a dispute in conversation, even though each could so far divest himself from prejudice, as to feel no partiality for his own opinion, but as it should prove to be better founded in reason. Every one is so desirous of not being vanquished, as they think it a reflection on their capacity, that they rather seek for reasons in support of their own side of the question, than consider the arguments offered by their opponents. Hence it is evident that neither can acquire, from a dispute of this sort, a full view of the subject before them, but each rather goes away more convinced, that his side of the question is the true one. Besides this, each as an argument suggests itself to his mind, is so convinced that it will end the dispute, that he interrupts his opponent in the midst of HIS argument, which frequently leaves his mind past recall, and his anger at this, prevents his paying any attention to that for the sake of which he was interrupted. Could men govern their tempers, and argue coolly on a subject, something might be expected; but as they conduct themselves in these cases, the results are usually quarrels or ill blood.

It is usual with many to endeavor to confuse their adversaries by turning their arguments into ridicule. In this they very frequently succeed; for the train of reasoning, which is in the mind in such cases, is broken, and it is

rarely possible to recall it. When a man is silenced in this manner, his antagonist feels the greatest triumph imaginable. He has completely refuted the other and exults in the superiority of his powers. Whether, however, ridicule in some cases be the test of truth or not, it is certain it is not in this. Because a man is confounded with a din of laughter, and so vexed at the perversion of his sentiments, that he cannot recall his thoughts to their usual channel, is that a proof that his opinions are false? If it were, then the truth or falsehood of any proposition would depend on the capability of its advocate to bear ridicule so as not be confused by it, and the same opinion, which is true when advanced by one man, would be false when by another, since we know there are some whom it is next to impossible to confuse. But the truth is men argue to gain a victory, and not to discover truth, and as in most cases it is easier to silence our adversary by ridicule than by any other means, and if we silence our adversary we gain a victory.

However, the habit of disputing is productive of many advantages, as it renders the mind acute and penetrating. A man accustomed to disputing is able to detect and expose sophistry much sooner than any other. A flaw in an argument, however it may be concealed, rarely escapes him. Perhaps indeed it subtilizes the mind too much, and renders it rather capable of discovering defects than beauties. But this is a disadvantage which by no means counterbalances the advantages resulting from the habit.

BARCA.

FOR THE WEEKLY VISITANT.

ON ROMANCE.

There is a species of literary composition adapted to every state of society and manners; and which never appears to full advantage, if scanned according to any other standard, save the existing circumstances that produced it. This theory seems to be founded in nature and truth, and might be illustrated by numerous proofs; but the attempt would lead us into a field too extensive for present discussion. We therefore leave our position to its own validity, and the conviction it may operate on our readers, and restrict ourselves to a few remarks on romance, which will in some measure explain our ideas.

That there was a period when romance, in all its wildest luxuriance, was only an embellished representation of living manners, and that at such a period it was neither useless nor unentertaining, will scarcely be denied. During the ages of chivalry, which gave rise to this mode of writing, it had a potent effect to keep up a principle of honor and delicacy in minds little illuminated by knowledge, or softened by refinement. It was the strong mirror that reflected the image of what the knight or the soldier ought to be; and in proportion as the likeness appeared perfect in one's own mind, was the pleasure and the credit of the beholder. [*To be continued.*]

HENRY HOPEWELL.

FOR THE WEEKLY VISITANT.

TO TIM. CONSIDERATION.

SIR,

I have attentively perused your short epistle in the Visitant, and, by leave of the Editor, will endeavor to remove those "obstacles" and "prove the ob-

jections" you make "not of sufficient weight to deter any one from entering the connubial state."

Your first objection is, "that you are not sufficiently independent in circumstances to take upon yourself the responsibility of a family." How do you know whether you will have any children or not? I tell you what, friend Tim, it is not good policy to reckon chickens before they are hatched. As to your not having money enough for the purpose, I don't believe it—'tis all stuff—an ignis fatuus. To get a wife is the most sure way to make your fortune.

Your second objection is, that you "don't know of any one who, in every particular, suits you." This, to be sure, is a serious objection; but if you are waiting to find perfection in any one person, I am sure you will wait till you are as old as Methuselah before you will find a phenomenon in nature so great. I am apprehensive you are rather difficult to please; you watch the faults rather than discover the virtues of our sex. Are you not a little old maidish, as we say?

Your third objection I should hardly notice, were it not for the severe sarcasm you have passed upon my sex. For my own part, though there may be instances of the kind you mention, still, I think you are not warranted in making the assertion: for if you have never had a wife, I do not conceive that you are a proper judge how many "blanks" there are to a "prize."

Your fourth objection is not much to the point. To this I would refer you to sacred writ for an answer. It says nothing about heaping riches together before you marry: but, it says, as the first command, "Increase and multiply!" "he that marries does well," &c. &c. &c.

For my own part, I am an advocate for people's getting married while they are young, before they become old and pevish—like ** ********, who never thought of getting married till he was almost forty. Besides it looks rather melancholy than otherwise to see a man of that age, who is shortly to be a candidate for the grave, surrounded by a flock of young children.

Now if I have not satisfactorily answered every objection, friend Tim, which you have made, you will be pleased to point out to me those I have not. Without you state some better reasons for remaining an *old bachelor* than those you have given, I shall hesitate not to declare you an enemy to our sex, and regardless of the duty you owe to your country, to society, and to posterity.

I shall expect to hear from you again.

ANN GOOD-INTENT.

FOR THE WEEKLY VISITANT.

TO TIM. CONSIDERATION.

SIR,

If you will bestow a few minutes "consideration" to what I am about to offer, in answer to your four "reasons" for neglecting matrimony, I presume you will be convinced, that, although it may "never be too late to do good," it is certainly time for you to put off the rusticity of a bachelor, for the more engaging and endearing name of husband.

You "do not feel sufficiently independent in circumstances to take upon yourself the responsibility of a family." This is your first objection. Why, truly, if every one were to wait till he had amassed an independent fortune,

before he ventured to "take unto him a wife," the world would soon suffer a very injurious decrease in its population. In that case, almost every one would spend the time, in which they were best calculated to enjoy the sweets of matrimony, in a lonely and comfortless "state of celibacy;" and many would at last find, that they had been pursuing a mere chimerical and delusive ignis fatuus.

Your second objection is, "you don't know of any one who in every particular suits you." Although some "consideration" in such an important affair may be very commendable; yet to look for perfection in any being clothed with human nature, certainly indicates a mind but very little acquaited with the human heart; and you must have entirely forgotten, that

"In Adam's fall
"We sinned all,"

or you would never have seriously advanced this as an objection to matrimony.

In your third objection, you aim to cast a slur upon the female sex, by insinuatiug that more than two thirds of them are as bad or worse than nothing. Be assured, sir, that this was a very inconsiderate "consideration," (if the expression be tenable) and you may rely upon it, that such declarations will never recommend you, in the eyes of any amiable fair.

Your fourth "reason," I consider as no objection at all; and your insinuation, that girls often "make the first advances," is certainly groundless; though I see no reason why a lady should not be allowed to express a passion which she cannot suppress, and which involves, perhaps, her present and future happiness.

Now, sir, I imagine that unless you are incorrigible, (and if we may believe your own declaration you are not,) you will cast off the austerity of a bachelior, and frankly acknowledge, that "when our sire

"Wander'd in the solitary shade,
"The MAKER saw, took pity, and bestow'd
"WOMAN, the last, the BEST RESERVE OF GOD."

SAM. CURSORY.

SCIENTIFIC.

ASTRONOMY.

From the Charleston Courier.

On Saturday evening last, Dr. Green delivered for the third time, in this city, a Lecture upon Astronomy, to a numerous and very respectable audience, among whom we were highly gratified to observe, many elegant and accomplished females. We must acknowledge that we were pleased with his performance. The illustration of his observations, by a *transparent* orrery, is, as far as we know, entirely new, and much better calculated to impress upon youthful minds a knowledge of the science of astronomy, than any other apparatus.—This brings the subject home to the senses, as the effect of light and shade is better seen and understood in this than in that of any other construction. This was particularly and beautifully shewn in the eclipses of Jupiter's satellites, the immersions and emersions of which were extremely well elucidated. Brazen orreries are well adapted for collegiate studies, where the representation of the motions of the heavenly bodies can be continued for any length of time by clock work, which affords the student daily opportunities of observing the different and complicated motions of all the planets, and their relative situations with respect to each other, at different periods of their revolutions: But none of the eclipses can be so well demonstrated as in the transparent orrery of Dr. Green.

LITERARY AMUSEMENT.

THE DAUGHTER,
OR A MODERN ROMANCE.

ADVERTISEMENT.—*I think the following little Narrative may be entitled* a Modern Romance. *A virtuous Wife is placed in the most dangerous situation; united to a brutalized being, and afterwards loving a virtuous and accomplished man. They love, but each conceals the terrible secret. She falls a melancholy Victim, but she does not violate her purity of character. It seems almost immoral to depict suffering and unhappy Virtue; but is this tale without it's moral?—It shews how a* FATHER *may be the* murderer *of his* DAUGHTER!

The situation is not uncommon, and the character of Clarissa is not singular; the slight story is without novelty. It has been told a thousad times at the Commons, but with a different catastrophe! The violation of the marriage state is not an evil merely directed to an Individual, but a violation of the peace of Society; since it takes away from the Female that assurance her chastity gives to the World, of her submission to the regulations of social order, and of her existence as a domestic character. Let this reply to those indifferent philosophers who aim at the annihilation of certain salutary notions which they call popular prejudices; *but who are for replacing these, by* their own prejudices *more inveterate, and more dangerous; and whose* Experiments on Society, *if they are suffered to proceed, promise to iutroduce a barbarism, more to be dreaded than that of the rudest society; for it would have all it's irregularities, without it's ignorance.*

The Arbour scene, where the concealed passion of Clarissa is made known by the aid of a soliloquy, I have borrowed from one Mr. Wieland.

Such a Soliloquy some may consider rather as an imperfect kind of invention, yet in some characters and in some situations, they are more natural than most persons imagine; high-wrought passion, sensible that it has preserved its virtue, at the cost of life, may well be supposed to address itself aloud to Heaven.

To catch those finer sensations, those intricate foldings, and those scarcely-perceptible variations of the mind, in a conflict like the present, demand a larger canvas and a Richardson: The anatomy of the human heart (of which Miravaux was so great a Master) has never been to the taste of vulgar Readers, whose eager curiosity, easily excited and never gratified, is alone delighted by rapid incidents, and the busy life of Narrative; with these the tenderest sentiment is tedious, and often unintelligible; for one must have a heart to value that which turns entirely on its feelings.

D'ISRAELI.

AMBITION has its Moloch fires. When the Daughter has been most affectionate, and known only to obey, the Father has become most cruel, and known only to command.

Clarissa, the daughter of Mordaunt, having early lost her mother, passed her youth in retirement. Her father, in the circle of a Court, absorbed in that vortex the tenderest emotions of domestic quiet; and his visits to Clarissa were occasional.

She had nothing to please her in retirment but Nature; the unfortunate, the neglected, and the sensitive find ever in that sublime power, first their consolation, and lastly their enjoyment. But why do I call Clarissa unfortunate? Innocence rendered her cheerful, and Sympathy interesting. In her laughing face blushed the freshest rose of health, while sometimes her eye was moistened by pity, like a rose oppressed by its own sweetness, that bows to shed its dews. Her bosom was incapable of half emotions; and her voice had all the delicacy of the sentiments it expressed; the echo of a tender heart! What are even these feminine graces without Sentiment! She was lovely, but it was Sensiblity that gave a charm to that loveliness. One sometime sees very beatiful instruments that yield very indifferent harmony, but Nature had lent a hidden spirit responding to the form of Clarissa; and the Music was fine as the Instrument! [*To be continued.*]

CURIOUS SPECIMEN OF RUSSIAN GALLANTRY.

FROM KARAMSIN'S TRAVELS.

The post-coach stopped at a house in a small town on this side of Hirschfeld, which I conceived to be, as usual, a public house. I walked in, and asked of the first that came towards me, with a low bow, for some Rhenish wine and water. I then threw myself into a chair, without thinking of pulling off my hat. In the room were four men, who conversed very civilly with me. A bottle of Rhenish wine was brought. I drank and praised the wine, and at last asked what I had to pay. "Nothing," answered a man, bowing at the same time, "you are not in a public house, but the guest of an honest burgher, who is extremely glad that you like his wine." Imagine my amazement! I pulled off my hat, and began to apologize. "It is not worth mentioning," said my host; "I request only your kindness for my daughter, who is going to accompany you." To which I replied, "I will treat her with politeness—with honor—and every thing you please." The daughter a pretty girl of twenty, dressed in a green surtout, with a black hat, entered the room. We bade adieu, got into the coach, and set off. Caroline (that was her name) told me, that she was going to her aunt in a neighbouring village. That I might not trouble her with farther questions, I took the Vicar of Wakefield from my pocket. My fellow-traveller yawned, and could scarcely keep her eyes open. At last she fell fast asleep, with her head upon my shoulder. I durst not stir, for fear of waking her; but a sudden and violent shake of the coach threw her to the other corner. I offered her my large pillow, which she took and placed under her head, and fell to sleep again. Meantime it grew dark. Caroline slept soundly, and did not awake till we reached the place where we parted. As to me, I behaved more honorably than even the virtuous knight, who is afraid of offending, by an immodest look, the bashful innocence entrusted to his care. Such examples, my friends, are rare, very rare in this age! Caroline, in her innocence, did not think it necessary to thank me for my reserve, and took leave of me rather coolly. God be with her!

POETRY.

FOR THE WEEKLY VISITANT.

Having frequently observed your poetical department enriched with very judicious selections, I communicate for insertion an extract from the improved edition of SOUTHEY'S JOAN OF ARC, which to persons uninfluenced by prejudice, will be peculiarly gratifying. Detached passages, it is acknowledged, lose their principal charm from obscurity; but the following, even under this disadvantage, must awaken congenial emotions. Glow of Genius "fills the soul."—The Maid acquaints Dunois with the commencement of her mysterious enthusiasm. T.

* * * * * * *

At length I heard of Orleans, by the foe
Walled in from human succour; to the event
All looked with fear, for there the fate of France
Hung in the balance. Now my troubled soul
Grew more disturbed, and shunning every eye,
I loved to wander where the forest shade
Frown'd deepest; there on mighty deeds to brood
Of shadowy vastness, such as made my heart
Throb loud. Anon I paused, and in a state
Of half expectance listened to the wind.

There is a fountain in the forest, called
The fountain of the Fairies. When a child

With most delightful wonder I have heard
Tales of the Elfin tribe, that on its banks
Hold midnight revelry. An antient oak,
The goodliest of the forest, grows beside ;
Alone it stands, upon a green grass plat,
By the woods bounded like some little isle :
It ever hath been deemed their favorite tree ;
They love to lie and rock upon its leaves,
And bask them in the moonshine. Many a time
Hath the woodman shown his boy where the dark round,
On the green-sward beneath its boughs, bewrays
Their nightly dance, and bade him spare the tree.
Fancy had cast a spell upon the place
And made it holy ; and the villagers
Would say, that never evil thing approached
Unpunished there. The strange and fearful pleasure,
That filled me by that solitary spring,
Ceased not in riper years ; and now it woke
Deeper delight, and more mysterious awe.

Lonely the forest spring ; a rocky hill
Rises beside it, and an aged yew
Bursts from the rifted crag, that overbrows
The waters ; caverned there unseen and slow
And silently they swell. The adder's tongue,
Rich with the wrinkles of its glossy green,
Hangs down its long lank leaves, whose wavy dip
Just breaks the tranquil surface. Antient woods
Bosom the quiet beauties of the place,
Nor ever sound profanes it, save such sounds
As silence loves to hear, the passing wind,
Or the low murmuring of the scarce-heard stream.

A blessed spot ! Oh how my soul enjoyed
Its holy quietness ; with what delight
Escaping humankind I hastened there
To solitude and freedom ! Thitherward
On a spring eve I had betaken me,
And there I sat, and marked the deep red clouds
Gather before the wind, the rising wind,
Whose sudden gusts, each wilder than the last,
Lumed as they rocked my senses. Soon the night
Darkened around, and the large rain-drops fell
Heavy ; anon with tempest-rage the storm
Howled o'er the wood. Methought the heavy rain
Fell with a grateful coolness on my head,
And the hoarse dash of waters, and the rush
Of winds, that mingled with the forest roar,
Made a wild music. On a rock I sat,
The glory of the tempest filled my soul,
And when the thunders pealed, and the long flash
Hung durable in heaven, and to mine eye
Spread the grey forest, all remembrance left
My mind, annihilate was every thought,
A most full quietness of strange delight
Suspended all my powers ; I seemed as though
Diffused into the scene.
At length a light
Approach'd the spring ; I saw my uncle Claude ;
His grey locks dripping with the midnight storm
He came, and caught me in his arms, and cried
My God ! my child is safe ! * * * *

HUMOUR.

A CURIOUS COURTSHIP.

A young gentleman and lady happened one Sunday to sit in the same pew —During the course of the sermon, the youth, read something in the eyes of the fair, which made a much deeper impression on his heart than the pious lecture of the parson ; as love is seldom at a loss for an expedient, he presented her with the following verse in the Epistle of John : "And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another." After perusal, she in answer opened to the 1st chapter of Ruth, and 16th verse— "And Ruth said, entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee, for whither thou goest I will go ; and where thou lodgest I will lodge ; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Thus was the treaty proposed, which in a little time was fully ratified by the parson.

Two smart fellows riding by a countryman who was sowing his ground, one of them called to him with an insolent air—"Well, honest fellow, 'tis your business to sow, but we reap the fruits of your labor." To which the countryman replied, "It is very likely you may, for I am sowing hemp."

In a great storm at sea, when all expected to be cast away, they went to prayers ; in the midst of their devotion, a boy burst into a loud laugh. The captain asked him, what he meant by it ? "Why, truly sir, (said he,) I laugh at that man's fiery nose there, to think what a hissing it will make bye and bye, when it comes into the water."

An artful country fellow of the neighborhood of Swindon, Hampshire, having found a silver snuff-box, which contained a quantity of halfpence, went into a public house in that town, where was a London rider, and, assuming an air of ignorance, asserted that he had found sixpenny worth of halfpence all in silver. The witty Londoner catching at the expression, bantered the poor rustic ; who managed the matter with so much address, as to engage him in a bet of fourteen guineas, which by the decision of the company present, he won upon producing his prize.

On a trial at the Admiralty Sessions, for shooting a seaman, the council for the crown asked one of the witnesses, which he was for, plaintiff or defendant.—Plaintiff or defendant ! says the sailor, scratching his head, why I don't know what you mean by plantiff or defendant. I come to speak for that man there ! pointing at the prisoner.—You are a pretty fellow for a witness, says, the council, not to know what plaintiff and defendant means ! Some time after, being asked by the same council, what part of the ship he was in at the time ; abaft the binnacle, my lord, says the sailor. Abaft the binnacle ! replied the barrister ; what part of the ship is that ? Ha ! ha ! ha ! chuckled the sailor, are you not a pretty fellow for a counsellor, (pointing archly at him with his finger) not to know what abaft the binnacle is !

TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

☞ Several communications, which came too late for this number, will be attended to.

☞ If the author of the enigmatical Love Letter wishes to see it in the Visitant, he will shew us in what manner he reads it.

Extracts from Dr. Priestley's Catechism : for the use of Schools.

SIXTH SALEM EDITION.

May be had at the Visitant Office—*Price* 6 *cents*.

PUBLISHED BY HAVEN POOL.

PRINTING neatly and correctly executed.—Orders respectfully solicited.